

# PARISH OF KIRKPATRICK-FLEMING.

PRESBYTERY OF ANNAN, SYNOD OF DUMFRIES.

THE REV. ALEXANDER MONILAWS, MINISTER.\*

## I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

*Name, Boundaries, &c.*—THE parish of Kirkpatrick-Fleming includes the old parishes of Kirkpatrick and Kirkconnel, which were united after the Reformation. It evidently derives its name from St Patrick, who was claimed by Scotchmen as their countryman, but honoured by Irishmen as their tutelary saint. The name of the lord of the manor, Fleming, during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, was added to the name of the present parish, to distinguish it from others of the same name. It extends from north to south about six miles, by a general breadth of three miles, and therefore contains eighteen square miles. Its figure, which is extremely irregular, especially towards the west and south corners, may be said to resemble a parallelogram, or a rhomboid. The parish is bounded on the east and north-east by Halfmorton, on the south-east and south by Graitney, on the west and south-west by Annan and Dornock, and on the north and north-west by Middlebie.

*Topographical Appearances.*—Its surface, which rises gradually from south to north to a moderate height above the level of the Solway, is diversified with a pleasing variety of waving elevations and fertile vales; and adorned by many a well cultivated field, surrounded and sheltered either by fine hedge-rows or thriving plantations. Three divisions, running from the north-west and south-west in an easterly direction, are distinctly marked. The south division is separated from the middle one by the romantic vale of the Kirtle; and the middle division is separated from the northern one by a vale, which commences at Burnfoot, near Springkell, and runs along the banks of Logan-burn. In these divisions, there are some points of view looking west, south, and east, which afford most extensive and beautiful prospects.

\* This Account has been drawn up by the Rev. Thomas Landells.

*Meteorology.*—The temperature of the atmosphere in general, and in some particular seasons, is remarkably mild. The thermometer ranges from about 28° in winter to 76° in summer on Fahrenheit's scale. In different seasons, it has been found to stand above 80°. The rains which prevail most, are towards the beginning of August and the end of September; they are well known by the names of the Lammas and equinoctial rains. Frequent and strong gusts of wind, accompanied with heavy rains from the west and south, are often experienced. In the winter months, too, continued and heavy rains frequently fall. But the rain which falls in this quarter is vastly different from the cold rains and hoar-fogs to which the eastern coasts are exposed. The winds that prevail in summer and harvest are from the west and south, and in winter and spring from the east and north. It has long been observed here, that when the heavy and extensive clouds, which sometimes rest upon the summit of Skiddaw, to the south of this parish, are borne on the wind, and carried northwards; and when the clouds, which often encircle the top of Criffel, which lies westward in East Galloway, are driven towards the land, rain soon follows. Hence the old rhyme,

When the mist takes the sea  
Fair weather it will be;  
But when the mist takes the land  
We expect rain off the sand.

Snow, of which there are seldom heavy falls, does not lie long. Though the climate is variable and uncertain, yet it cannot justly be said to be unpropitious either to plants or animals. Many persons are grievously afflicted with rheumatism in the spring, and towards the end of autumn. But as the country around this is level and open, and rarely infested with fogs, the air, upon the whole, is pure; and as it lies at a short distance from the Solway Frith, a considerable portion of it is low and warm. The farmers generally begin to sow about the middle of March, and to reap towards the middle of August. Epidemic diseases and malignant fevers seldom make their appearance.

*Hydrography.*—This parish is abundantly supplied with perennial springs of the purest water, which is generally of a soft quality. These springs flow from sandstone, in some places of a dark red, in other places of a gray colour, and occasionally from limestone; or they issue from gravel-beds or fissured rocks. About a quarter of a mile from the mansion-house of Springkell, there is a very re-

markable spring, which Mr Pennant, in 1772, said was the largest that he had ever seen, except the famous spring at Holywell, in Flintshire. Near the Gair farmstead, which is built on a ridge considerably elevated above the level of Springkell House, and near to limestone rock, several streams which issue from springs are observed to sink into the ground, and entirely disappear from the view. It is generally believed that these streams, during their passage through subterraneous fissures, become united, and burst violently out in one large stream in the present garden of Springkell. There are four mineral springs in this parish, of which three are nearly of the same nature and qualities. The first, distinguished by the name of the Branteth Well, is situated in the north-east part of the parish, in a moss of considerable extent. Its waters having at different times been subjected to a chemical analysis, were found to be strongly impregnated with sulphur. Its smell is most offensive, and its taste disagreeable. It is used with great success in scrofulous and scorbutic cases. The late Sir Humphry Davy stated some years ago that it was very similar to the Moffat Well. The other three mineral springs are all of the chalybeate kind, and do not differ materially from each other.

The Highmoor Well, in all probability impregnated with a substance not possessed by the others, has often been used with advantage in bilious and other stomachic complaints. The second of this kind, distinguished by the name of Charley's Well, upon the farm of Goukhill; and the third by that of Wyesbie-hill Well,—are exactly of the same nature and qualities, and are said to possess all the power and medicinal virtues of the famous Hartfell Spa near Moffat. \*

Kirtle is the only river in this parish. It has its source in a valley, which is formed by Winterhope-hill on the one side, and the farm of Kirtlehead on the other, in the parish of Middlebie; and running towards the north corner of Kirpatrick-Fleming, divides the two parishes for a space of more than four miles, and, then crossing the parish in a south-east direction, falls into the Solway to the east of Redkirk, in Graitney. Its length is about 18 miles; its breadth at a medium, where it divides this parish from Middlebie, above 23, and after that 30 feet. In it there are trouts, eels, and perch.

In the south of Scotland it would be difficult to find another river of equal size to the Kirtle, which has its banks more richly

\* See Account of Moffat.

covered with natural wood, or more highly ornamented with plantations, gentlemen's family seats, and ancient towers.

*Geology and Mineralogy.*—This part of the country is of secondary formation. “It consists of dark-red, brown, yellow, and, in some places, of gray or white sandstone, in some parts dipping to the south, and in other parts to the west, disposed in thick strata, and frequently containing vegetable impressions. A great quantity of limestone, dipping to the west, ranges through this district from east to west. It is covered by, and alternates with, sandstone, and contains a variety of shells.” In the limestone quarries of Caldronlee, casts of bivalve shells and other organic remains of various forms are often found. Some of these strongly resemble the shape of a ram's horn. The cover of the rocks is almost always of the old alluvial kind, composed of clay, sand, and small water-worn stones, with angular pieces of the red sandstone, upon which it generally rests. Its common colour is red, or inclining to red. In this parish there are some flow-mosses of considerable depth and extent. Out of these mosses many large trunks of trees, chiefly oaks, have repeatedly been dug.

The soil in the under part of the parish being underlaid with rock, with gravel, or with sand, is generally light and kindly. In many parts it consists of a strong red earth, with a large mixture of sand, to a considerable depth. When this lies upon a gravelly bottom, as is generally the case along the side of the river, it is reckoned land of the first quality. A soil nearly the same, but more shallow, is frequently to be met with upon a bottom inclining to clay and gravel. The same kind of earth, with a very small mixture of sand, frequently makes its appearance upon a strong brick-clay bottom, exceedingly cold, and almost impenetrable by water. Nearly two-thirds of the land of this parish consist of moss, varying in depth from six to eighteen inches, resting upon a bed of clay. As a subsoil, clay is found below the green sward of ridges, and under peat-mosses, and soft bogs, and is generally either white, blue, or red.

There is also found a small portion of whitestone land, which is well-known in this district as a soil naturally barren, though capable of improvement in various degrees.

Many trials have been made near Springkell to discover coal, but they have hitherto proved unsuccessful. Mr Robert Bald, mining-engineer, Edinburgh, in a report which he gave in 1829, regarding the minerals on the estate of Springkell, observes towards

the end of it, "I cannot take upon me to say that no workable coal will be found on the Springkell estate, next to Chapel-hill, but, from my experience, and comparing the strata at Springkell with those of the coal districts of Scotland, I have little or no hope of a workable coal being found there."

*Trees.*—The soil, particularly along the banks of the river, is congenial to oak, ash, plane, beech, elm, alder, birch, to Scots fir, larches, and various species of ornamental trees. Near the mansion-house of Springkell, there are different trees above 150 years of age, which measure from 9 to 11 feet in circumference, taken at 3 feet from the ground. At Wyesbie-house, there are three aged and wide-spreading oaks, which measure about 10 feet in circumference. In a holm, too, near Mossknow-house, there are two ornamental ashes, and an aged beech, which are 10 or 11 feet in circumference.

## II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

*Land-owners.*—Sir Patrick Maxwell, Bart., and Colonel Graham are the chief land-owners; who, along with the other heritors, give, by their example and countenance, great encouragement to their tenants to persevere in improving their farms.

*Parochial Registers.*—The parochial register of marriages commences in 1709; and that of baptisms in 1713. These registers, though not voluminous, appear to have been regularly kept.

*Historical Events and Antiquities.*—In former times this parish, rich in feudal associations, was undoubtedly the scene of bloody contests and cruel rapine. In feudal times, various causes of jealousy and discord subsisted among the chiefs of clans, and gave rise to as many wars. During these endless contests, the country seems to have been filled with castles and places of strength, erected for the security of the inhabitants, not, in general, against foreign forces, but against internal hostilities. The square towers, which were built near the frontier of England, were chiefly used by their possessors, in all probability, as places of security against the formidable inroads, and fierce attacks of the English. In this neighbourhood the towers were generally of a square form, and three stories high. The roof was covered with square flags; with a gentle tapering towards the top, and surrounded by battlements and parapets. The old tower of Woodhouse, having been unroofed and greatly rent for many a year, is now in a most ruinous condition. About three years ago, its south side fell down, during a

stormy night, with a dreadful crash.\* Within a space of four miles round this tower, there are no fewer than seven of the same kind. The family of Flemings, who appear to have been more distinguished for their gallant defence of their native country, and nobly repelling a foreign foe, than for that predatory manner of life, which, in these times, was styled the "spirit and joy of the borders," in the thirteenth and beginning of the fourteenth centuries, possessed certain lands in this parish, by the tenure of defending them at all times against their southern neighbours. At a place called Redhall, on the left bank of the Kirtle, stood the baronial mansion of the "bold Flemings." Towards the conclusion of Baliol's reign, in one of Edward's incursions into Scotland, the tower of Redhall was attacked by an English army. It was at that time occupied by no more than thirty Flemings, who, in spite of every attempt, held out against a close siege of three days. Having nobly defended it to the last extremity, they all chose, rather than submit, to expire in the flames which had been kindled by their foes. Not the smallest trace of this tower, which was entirely demolished in the beginning of the last century, now remains. †

Within the burial ground of Kirkconnel a part of the old church, which is said to have derived its name from Connell, a Scotch saint, who flourished about the commencement of the seventh century, is still standing. The church-yard is situated in a rich holm of very considerable extent. Here is the scene of the impassioned and pathetic tale of "fair Helen of Kirkconnel-Lee," which has been so often told both in prose and verse. ‡

About seventy years ago, a man who was casting peats near Cove, found a piece of gold, about eighteen inches under ground, worth about L. 12. On one end of it was plainly seen the word *Helenus*, in raised Roman capitals, evidently effected by a stamp, and on the other end, in pricked or dotted characters, were observed the letters M. B. Some gave it as their opinion, that it

\* This is reported to have been the first house in Scotland to which Robert Bruce repaired, when he was flying from Longshanks. Bruce, at his departure thence, having taken along with him one of the sons of Irving, the gentleman by whom the house was then possessed, first made the youth his secretary, next created him a knight, and lastly, made him a present of the lands of the forest of Drum, as a reward for his fidelity and services.

† For a farther account of the antiquities of this parish, particularly the cross of Merkland, and Dunakellie grotto, see MS. preserved among the Archives of the Church.

‡ See Account of Middlebie.

had been used as an ornament for the wrist, while others thought that it had been used as a fibula for fastening a garment.

*Modern Buildings.*—In the north-west part of the parish stands the mansion-house of Springkell, which was erected in 1784, in the Grecian style of architecture, about 200 or 300 yards to the eastward of the place where the old family residence and village of Kirkconnel stood. The present mansion-house, the seat of Sir Patrick Maxwell, Bart. was greatly enlarged about sixteen years ago, by the addition of a handsome wing to the east, and a corresponding one to the west end. The building is remarkably elegant, and the surrounding grounds are tastefully laid out.—A mile distant from Springkell, on the right bank of the Kirtle, is the tower of Blackethouse in Middlebie, formerly possessed by a family of the name of Bell.—About half a mile below this, on the left bank, is situated the house of Alderbeck, which now belongs to the proprietor of Springkell, and is occupied by a most respectable and enterprising tenant. Langshaw, the seat of John Barker, Esq. is situated about a mile from this, on the same side of the river, and is a neat and commodious house.—About half a mile from Langshaw, Wyesbie, the residence of Mrs Mair, is delightfully situated on the same side of the river.—At a short distance from Wyesbie stands the ancient family seat of the Irvings of Bonshaw, on the right side of the river in the parish of Annan. The old mansion-house is built near the edge of a steep rock, which rises to a considerable height above the bed of the Kirtle.—On the same side of the river, Robgill-tower, belonging to James Smail, Esq., and formerly possessed by the late Sir Emilius Irving, Bart., is situated about half a mile from Bonshaw, on the northern confine of the parish of Dornock. The scenery around Robgillhouse, of which the old tower forms a part, is most picturesque and beautiful.—Cove, the romantic seat of Francis Irving, Esq., built in 1724, Broatshouse, the residence of William Batty, Esq. lying about two miles south-west of Cove; and Newtonhouse, the residence of Matthew Rea, Esq. standing about a quarter of a mile eastward of Cove,—are substantial and comfortable buildings. At a short distance from the church is Mossknow, the mansion-house of Colonel Graham. The situation of the house, which is a handsome modern building, is enriched by fine plantations, and an excellent garden. An extensive and fertile holm, intersected by the Kirtle, and beautified by straggling trees of considerable size, opens to the south.

For many years past, the houses here have regularly been built of stone and lime, and covered with slate; and the clay-houses, once numerous, have almost all been pulled down, except towards the east and south ends of the parish; and more modern and commodious dwellings erected in their place.

### III.—POPULATION.

According to the census by Dr Webster in 1755, the population was	1147
last Statistical Account, 1792,	1542
census of 1821,	1696
1831,	1666

From 1821 there has been a decrease of thirty. Since the census was taken in 1821, a number of families in the north part of the parish left their farms, which were afterwards let annually as pasture; and emigrated to other parishes or to America. This, in a great measure, may be assigned as the cause of the decrease.

1. Number of families in the parish,	304
of families chiefly employed in agriculture,	149
chiefly employed in trade, manufactures, or handicraft,	78
2. Number of unmarried men, bachelors or widowers, upwards of 50 years of age,	17
of unmarried women, including widows, upwards of 45,	55
3. The average number of births yearly, for the last 7 years,	45
of deaths,	30
of marriages,	15
4. The number of persons at present under 15 years of age,	666
upwards of 70,	71

The number of proprietors of land of the yearly value of L. 50 and upwards, is 12.

*Habits and Character of the People.*—The habits of the people are in general cleanly, and their dress is of late years greatly improved. Gray plaids are frequently worn instead of great-coats. The ordinary food of the farm-servants at their meals is oatmeal porridge for breakfast, butcher-meat, with potatoes and bread, for dinner, and porridge for supper. The food of mechanics is nearly the same. The cottagers commonly make use of tea or coffee for breakfast and supper, but seldom have it in their power to purchase butcher-meat for dinner. Though farmers and mechanics, manufacturers, and agricultural labourers have various difficulties with which to struggle, yet they appear, upon the whole, to be tolerably contented with their situation and circumstances in life. The inhabitants of this parish are, with few exceptions, possessed of a good deal of penetration, and a great fund of common sense, and are well acquainted with the principles of that religion which they profess. The farmers are a respectable class of men,—industrious

in their calling,—just in their dealings,—and obliging in their manners. The people in general are sober, pious, and regular in their attendance upon public worship. They are kind and hospitable to strangers, and ever ready to relieve the distressed.

#### IV.—INDUSTRY.

##### *Agriculture and Rural Economy.*—

The total number of imperial acres in the parish is	11,575
Acres in the parish cultivated, or occasionally in tillage,	8,061
In rough pasture,	2,009
Flow-moss,	900
About 400 acres of that moss, by proper drainage and surface-culture, might be converted into meadow or pasture-ground.	
Capable of being cultivated with a profitable application of capital,	1,400
Under wood,	605

The trees which are planted or indigenous are chiefly Scots firs, larches, beeches, birch, alder, oak, and ash. The general management of the wood is such as reflects very great credit on the judgment and taste of the several proprietors.

*Rent of Land.*—The average rent of the arable land per acre is 18s. 3d.; of grazing, for cow or ox, at the rate of L. 3; full-grown sheep, 10s.

*Rate of Wages.*—Labourers have commonly 1s. a-day in summer, and 9d. in winter, with victuals; or 1s. 6d. and 1s. 3d. without victuals. Masons receive 3s. and carpenters 2s. 6d. per day without victuals.

*Husbandry.*—The common mode of rotation is six years. But it is neither rigidly enforced by the land-owner, nor strictly adhered to by the tenant. The manures which are principally used for meliorating the soil and raising crops are lime and dung collected upon the different farms. Lime can be conveniently carted from Donkins and Blacketrigg, in Middlebie, and from Caldronlee, near Springkell, in this parish, at 1s. 2d. per Carlisle bushel, which contains a little less than three Winchester bushels. The crops to which most attention is paid in the greater part of this parish, and which, indeed, most liberally reward the labours of the husbandman, are barley, oats, and potatoes. Barley may be considered, in a great measure, as an article for the market. Wheat, of which there is not much sown, generally answers well, as it is never sown but when the land is in high cultivation. Turnips are here a precarious crop, except on the best land. A crop of potatoes, even in common years, is the most valuable that is raised. An immense number of swine is annually fed in this quarter.

“By means of draining, many acres of unproductive morass and wet land have been brought into a state of luxuriant fertility. By its proper application, land, which before the art was introduced was considered valuable, has been rendered doubly so; and by draining alone our climate has been greatly ameliorated.” Though a great deal has been done in this neighbourhood by proprietors and tenants for the improvement of land, by removing surface and under water by means of open, covered, and tile drains, yet much still remains to be done. Leases of fifteen years are generally given on improved farms; but when a farm has to be enclosed and drained, a lease of twenty-one years is considered sufficiently short. The rents of a small number of farms here are from L. 440 to L. 200; of a great number from L. 200 to L. 50; and of some from L. 50 downwards. The farmers are in general accommodated with comfortable houses and convenient offices.

The improvement of moss by a covering of clay was introduced into this quarter, and tried with excellent effect about twenty-eight years ago, by William Blacklock, who was then farmer of Howgillside, upon the estate of Springkell. “After the land has been ploughed into ridges of 14 or 18 feet wide, labourers with spades widen and deepen the furrows from 15 to 18 inches, and throw the substratum of clay upon the ridges. The moss is thus pressed down, and its depth diminished. This is repeated next season, and gives new soil for a second crop, equal to, if not better than the first. Lime is applied in different quantities, according to the nature of the soil. On clay lands, from 50 to 60 Carlisle bushels of shells (nearly 3 Winchester each) are *floured* and spread; and for moss, from 20 to 30 are found to be sufficient as one dose, which must be repeated every rotation of seven or eight years. Where moss is from 18 inches to 2 feet deep, it is first ploughed very thin, and laid over quite flat. It is allowed to lie in that position till the plants rot a good deal, and limed upon the face. It is again ploughed a little deeper in the same furrows, and sown with oats. After the crop is removed, it is ploughed a third time, and clayed as above for the second crop, and the same operation is repeated for a third crop, amongst which grass seeds are sown. The expenses of each claying are found to be about L. 1, 5s. per acre, by which, and the ploughings, the moss loses fully one-third of its depth, and the surface becomes firm for the feet of cattle.”\*

*Quarries.*—In the immediate vicinity of Springkell there is a

\* Letter from Mr Easton, who was some time ago factor at Springkell, to Dr Singer.

great quantity of excellent lime-rock. Caldronlee-quarry is trough-shaped, and its line of bearing is westerly, *i. e.* the longitudinal line of trough,—and the strata rise very suddenly both to the north and south. It is in beds; and its thickness is about 30 feet. It rests upon slate-clay of a grayish colour, and the upfilling of the trough is of the same kind of slate-clay, conforming with the dip and rise, or trough of the lime-rock. The *terrage* or cover is thick, particularly in the centre of the trough. Here are four good draw-kilns. The coals for burning the lime are brought either from Canobie, nine miles distant, or by sea from the collieries of Cumberland to Annan, whence they are carted eight miles to the kilns. The price of a Winchester bushel of shells is about 4½d.

Near Blacketrigg, which is on the border of Middlebie parish, and about one mile distant from Springkell, is a marble quarry, from which large blocks have been raised for marble works. In Springkell House there are several mantel-pieces and tables of this marble. The colour is gray, tinged and clouded with red. As it is susceptible of a high polish, it is pleasing to the eye, and very suitable for mantel-pieces and pavement for saloons. This marble rock is overlaid by the common sandstone, as it appears at the farm-stead of Blacketrigg.

In this parish there is a great abundance of freestone, very different both in quality and colour. In the north part of the parish, near to the farm-building of Blackcleugh, the rock is quartzzy sandstone, with beds of soft red marly rock, both of a deep red colour. The dip is westerly, with a declination of at least one in two. The rock of Snabb-quarry, situated near the north boundary of the estate of Springkell, is a good quartzzy sandstone of a whitish colour, and has very little cover of earth. The dip is to the eastward of north.

The quarry of Craigshaws consists of sandstone of a white colour, occasionally mixed with yellow. Its dip is moderate, about one in five westerly. There are only about four feet of peat-earth above it. The quarry of Branteth consists of rock of nearly the same colour, having a westerly dip. At Sarkshields there is a quarry of the hard chocolate-coloured sandstone, which is wrought for the roads in that neighbourhood. The dip is to the north. Along the banks of the Kirtle, there is in general nothing to be seen but the red coloured sandstone, dipping westerly, with subordinate beds of soft red-coloured marly rock, which gives a deep red colour to the alluvial cover. The best freestone quarries here are to be found upon the estate of Cove. In one of these quarries the rock is red

sandstone, with a subordinate bed of very white sandstone. In another the rock is of a fine gray colour, occasionally mixed with yellow. It dips to the S. S. W., and has a cover of considerable depth. It admits of a fine polish, and is very durable. Within the last twenty years, the principal stones which were used in building the splendid bridge of Carlisle, and also the magnificent mansion of Kinmont, in the parish of Cummertrees, were carted from these quarries. Many ship-loads, too, have at different times been sent to Ireland.

*Produce.*—The average gross amount and value of produce yearly raised in the parish, as far as can be ascertained, is as follows :

2687 imperial acres of grain of all kinds, at L. 4 per acre,	-	-	L. 10748	0	0
1152 acres of potatoes and turnips, &c. at L. 4,	-	-	4608	0	0
1535 acres of hay, whether meadow or cultivated, at L. 3, 10s.	-	-	5872	10	0
Pasture land, at L. 1, 10s. per acre,	-	-	2687	0	0
Rough pasture, at 6s. 7½d.	-	-	2009	0	0
Four gentlemen's gardens,	-	-	150	0	0
Twenty kitchen gardens,	-	-	80	0	0
Woods, &c. 605 acres at 11s. per acre,	-	-	392	15	0
Lime quarries,	-	-	150	0	0
Freestone quarries,	-	-	100	0	0
			<b>L. 26217</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>
	Acres imperial.		Average price of each.		
Number of draught horses, 220	-	-	L. 16	0	0
Cows, - - - 782	2946	at 3 acres each,	7	0	0
Young cattle from 1 to 2					
year old, - - - 1167	1750½	at 1½ acre,	3	10	0
Mares and foals, - - - 50	300	at 6 acres each, for a mare & foal,	9	0	0
Sheep, - - - 600	300	at ½ an acre each,	0	16	0
	<b>4696</b>	<b>total acres of pasture,</b>			
Of swine, - - - 900	-	-	3	0	0

The real rent of the parish is L. 7369.

*Manufactures.*—About 150 cotton-weavers, who are employed by Messrs Ferguson and Dickson, Carlisle, are here the only manufacturers. They work six days a-week, and twelve hours per day. Each of them earns about 7s. per week. These individuals, not being crowded together in great numbers, suffer no very material injury either in their health or morals from the line of life which they follow.

#### V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

*Market-Towns, &c.*—Those to which the people of this parish resort are Ecclefechan, in the parish of Hoddam, and Annan, about five miles distant from the centre of this parish; also Carlisle, distant thirteen miles, to which many of the inhabitants go weekly. The post-towns are Ecclefechan and Annan.

*Means of Communication.*—The road from Carlisle to Glasgow, and to Edinburgh by Moffat, runs through the middle division of the parish, five miles in length; and in the western corner, near Langshaw, crosses the road, which runs from Annan to Edinburgh by Langholm and Selkirk, in a northerly direction, four miles in length. A road which was opened up some years ago from Annan to Langholm, by Stapleton, Beltenmont, and Chapelknow, runs from the south-west in an easterly direction, nearly four miles in length. The Glasgow mail passes this every morning from Carlisle to Glasgow, and every afternoon from Glasgow to Carlisle.

Four bridges have been thrown across the Kirtle, and connect this parish with Middlebie on the north-west. There is one also over the Kirtle at Beltenmont, and another over a rivulet at Cleugh-side, which joins this parish, to Dornock on the south-west, with two on the Glasgow road. All these bridges are in excellent condition.

*Ecclesiastical State.*—The situation of the church, though surrounded by the most densely peopled part of the parish, is not convenient for the inhabitants of the northern division, which is distant from it about five miles. It was partly rebuilt fifty-six years ago, and then put into a state of complete repair. But at present its interior part is in such a miserable condition as again to require a thorough repair. By a decided majority of the heritors, it is thought that a new church should immediately be built. The sittings are all free, and can accommodate about 600 individuals. The manse and offices have been greatly improved within the last twenty years; and the glebe, which consists of  $6\frac{1}{2}$  imperial acres of superior, and  $17\frac{1}{2}$  of inferior land, is worth L. 20 a-year. As the teinds are exhausted, the present incumbent agreed some years ago to receive from the heritors a fixed sum of L. 210 yearly. There is no chapel of any kind here. The number of families attending the Established church is 290, and of persons of all ages, 1595. Thirteen families, or 71 persons of all ages, attend dissenting chapels. Of that number, those who are of the Relief persuasion attend a chapel at Waterbeck, in Middlebie; and those who belong to the United Secession church attend either a chapel at Ecclefechan, in Hoddam, or one which was lately erected at Rigg, in Graitney. Divine service at the Established church is well attended by both the higher and lower orders. The average number of communicants is 300. The average amount of yearly contributions for religious and charitable purposes is L. 14; of church collections yearly, L. 30.



tors and kirk-session, are not apt, therefore, to consider it as degrading to do so.

*Inns.*—In this parish there are four small inns or public-houses, which evidently have a pernicious effect upon the morals of a small portion of the people.

*Fuel.*—Peat is commonly used as fuel; but a considerable quantity of coal, which is carted either from Caröbie or Annan, is also here consumed. The price of a cart-load of coals is 10s. 6d.; and of a cart-load of peats, 1s. 4d. Twenty-seven cart-loads of peats are considered sufficient for a cottager's family, which has only one constant fire.

#### MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.

That unprofitable mode of cultivation which prevailed in this parish forty years ago has, in a great measure, been abandoned, and a more extensive and liberal system of agriculture has been adopted in its stead. Many acres of moor-ground have been turned over with the plough, and rendered tolerably productive, and a considerable portion of flow-moss has been converted into verdant meadow or pasture by drainage and surface-culture. The improvement, which has been made upon the south-west part of the parish, and also upon that which lies to the north of the Glasgow road, and is bounded by the Langholm road on the north-west, is most striking. In 1792, the real rent of the parish was L. 2870, and now it is L. 7369. The houses of proprietors and farmers, of mechanics and cottagers, have been vastly improved within the last thirty years. A great change for the better has also taken place in the language, the dress, and the manner of living, of the inhabitants. As the soil still admits of extensive amelioration, much might be done in accomplishing that end by men possessed of capital, skill, and enterprise. A line of communication from Sarkshields, near Springkell, to Kirkpatrick church, by Gilshaw's flow, is greatly wanted. In all probability that line of road will be formed ere long. Farms here above L. 150 a-year are the bane of the comfort, happiness, and independence of the lower classes. Proprietors and farmers, by supplying labourers with constant employment at all seasons, by giving them a fair remuneration for their industry, and by discountenancing vice wherever it appears, and encouraging piety and virtue, will, unquestionably, promote both the welfare of the lower orders, and the general good.

*February 1834.*